



# KANSAS INFANT-TODDLER SERVICES

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BULLETIN

TAB #2

OCTOBER, 1996

### RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE DETERMINATION OF FREQUENCY AND INTENSITY OF EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES THROUGH THE IFSP PROCESS

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The development of outcomes during the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) process provides the opportunity for families to identify and document the changes they want for their child and family. The concerns, priorities and resources of a family, as well as the findings of evaluations and assessments of the child's developmental status, are integrated into these outcomes. Suggested approaches, strategies, activities and early intervention services are identified to assist with securing the desired results. This bulletin addresses information concerning the determination of the frequency and intensity of those identified services. (Other components included in the content of the IFSP, such as criteria, procedures, timelines, family information, location, payment arrangement, etc., are not addressed here.)

#### **BACKGROUND**

Federal law and Kansas state regulations require that the content of the IFSP include a statement of the major outcomes identified and the specific early intervention services necessary to meet the unique needs of the child and family. The frequency, intensity and method of delivering the services are included in this statement. (34 CFR 303.344)

#### **DEFINITIONS**

**Frequency and intensity:** the number of days or sessions that a service will be provided, the length of time the service is provided during the session, and whether the service is provided on an individual or group basis (34 CFR 303.344)

**Method:** how a service is provided (34 CFR 303.344)

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- Service coordinators inform families about the scope of early intervention services, the range of available resources, including family resources and how early intervention services will be coordinated with medical and other services.
- All professionals (and others as identified by the family) involved in evaluation and assessment of an infant or toddler are given the opportunity to participate in the development of the IFSP for an eligible child.
- Members of the IFSP team consider recommendations included in evaluation and assessment reports in the context of the child's current developmental status in all areas, current family concerns, priorities, resources and identified developmental outcomes.
- Outcomes related to the child's identified developmental needs guide decisions about the frequency and intensity of early intervention services for an individual child and family. Program availability and fixed program models are not the basis for determining the type, frequency, intensity and duration of services.
- Flexibility in determining frequency and intensity of early intervention services is encouraged. The IFSP process does not require that eligible children and their families receive services on a fixed schedule over a predetermined period of time. Although an IFSP must be reviewed at least every six months, families and service providers can modify outcomes and services to meet the changing needs of a child and family more frequently, as conditions warrant. For example, a particular service could be intensified for a short period of time to enhance emerging skills or the frequency of a service could be reduced temporarily while other outcomes are being addressed.